IMPRIMATUR.

March 30th.
1693.

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DIVINE AND MORAL DISCOURSES ON Divers Subjects.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

TO THE

QUEEN.

Madam,

These Papers are Humbly Dedicated to Your Majesty, by Your Majesties

Dutiful and

Obedient Subject

9

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Short

HE who loves Beauty, and to be beloved again; let him love God, who is the greateſt Beauty and the greateſt Lover.

He who loves riches, let him love God, who is an Infinite Treaſure of riches.

He who is Ambitious, and loves honour, let him love God the Fountain of honour.

He who loves pleaſure, let him love God, at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore, and who is himſelf an Infinite Fountain of Joy.

He who loſes his Soul, has loſt all.

He who ſecures his Soul, has ſecur'd all.

One moment in Heaven will ſatisfie for all that we have ſuffer'd on earth.

The condition on which the hap-

happineſs of Heaven is promiſed us, is, that we will be happy on earth, by living according to virtue.

God will protect us, and ſupport us, and reward us, in his own Service.

None are Wiſe, or Great, or Happy, but the virtuous.

Virtue is a Nobler thing then a Crown.

Nothing is wit or parts, but virtue and happineſs, and nothing ſo dull, and ſtupid, and weak, as vice, and miſery, let the man be nere ſo pert, or nere ſo grave.

Nothing can befriend us but virtue, Nothing can touch or hurt us but ſin.

A good life is the beſt ſence in the world; and vice is the greateſt Inſence and irreaſon in nature.

Of

Of the Chriſtian Religion in general.

'TIS certain there is nothing ſo charming, ſo advantageous as the practice of the Chriſtian Religion, while it ſecures to us all the comforts of this Life, and of that to come; that purifies our Bodies, and adorns our Souls, that raiſes our Hope, and enflames our Love, and rejoyces our Faith, and baniſhes Deſpair by the infinite Love and Mercy of the Holy Trinity, that attends this holy practice, which diſperſes our Sorrows and averts our Griefs, but ſwells our Joys, and enflames our Tryumph, and chafes our Hope, and deſcends the Angels, and mixes Heaven with human Life, and drowns the World in a Deluge of Joys,

and an Ocean of Comforts, overflowing all with unspeakable satisfactions and pleasure.

If unspeakable joys can Charm, if everlasting hopes can move, if extasies as long as Eternity and endless Rapture can prevail with us to love our own happiness, and befriend our own Beings, we cannot choose but be in love with Religion, and charm'd with Virtue, the sure means of so much Tryumph, and such large Joys, that are bigger then our Notions, and stretch themselves over all Eternity, and hold out as long as God: And now what can we wish for more then Religion assures us of? if happiness can provoke us, here it is to be had; if our own desires can satisfie us, here we shall enjov them and more, there is nothing that's pleasant or profitable but shall flow in upon us in the fullest measures, and overflow our souls for ever.

The

The moſt unbounded fancy will find it ſelf exceeded by Religion, which gives beyond what that can imagine, and ſurpaſſes it's moſt heated deſires, and inſtead of contracting, it enlarges our deſires, and gives them more than ſatisfaction; it entertains our reaſon with juſt and equal Objects, and feeds it with rational and proper ſatisfactons, and always keeps in it's view, that which is luſhious, great and divine, pure and Noble, firm and Everlaſting; in Religion no labour ſhall be loſt, no ſorrow ſhall be able to oppreſs us, no pleaſure ſhall abuſe us, no vanity enſnare us, but we ſhall be wiſe for our ſelves, and wiſe for ever, we ſhall be uſeful to others by the greateſt charity of our devotions, if we are poor, and by the leſſer charity of our almes too, if we are rich; we ſhall be always employ'd to the height of our beings, and exert the perfection of our Natures,

and act above them in the Elevations of Grace.

None of our actions shall be lost, or recoyle with mischief upon us, we shall be strangers to the confusions that attend on pride, and escape the Storms of passion, and the racks of Envy, and the disgraces of Lust, and the toils, and the labours, and the precipices; and after all the follie of Ambition, and a Sad, a foolish, and an empty Greatness; and sit down in the peace, and wisdom, and quiet, and joys, and security, if not in the transports of a fair, an easie, and a wise happiness at present, and a ravishing hope that can't be described but by uneasie joys, and furies of happiness, and convulsions of pleasure, and Agonies of delight.

And now who can employ his labours wisely any where else? where the income is no less then Infinite, and Eternal, in which

Angels

Angels assist, and attend him; that Cloud of glorious Witnesses, who fan the Toils of the Confessors and Martyrs, and the Labours of the Laps'd and the Penitent, with the brightest Joys, and peaceful Whispers.

And whither should we now go for Happiness, but to Religion, the Mother of Satisfactions and Content, the Parent of Delight and Hope, of present Joy and future Immortality.

Of

Of the Benefits of Patience in particular.

WHoever conſiders the vaſt and eternal Rewards that are propos'd in the other Life, will ſoon be perſwaded to believe, that all we can ſuffer in this Life is eaſie and little, joyn'd with the Aſſiſtances that are given us from Heaven for our ſupport, and if we conſider that we ſuffer for him who is Infinitely Beautiful, and loves as infinitely, and is infinitely Glorious, and is infinitely able to make us happy, and infinitely willing, our very miſeries will be luſhious and charming, and our Sufferings will be drown'd in Joys unſpeakable and full of Glory. 'Twill be pleaſant to ſuffer for ſo much Beauty, and his Will will always be charming, and his Love will always charm us: now whatever we do or ſuffer for an infinite Beauty, and an infinite Love,

Love, cannot be without tranſports and extaſies; the feigntings of Love, that turns all into joy and raviſhment, into peace and conſolation and the bigger joy will drown the leſſer miſery; the viſits of Love, and the irruptions of Heaven, and the kindneſs of the ſupream Beauty, breaking in upon the Soul, will make every thing unſpeakably charming and triumphant, ſuch as no Humane Joys can equal, nor all the World is able to purchaſe; ſuch as the *Cæſars* never knew, nor the bloody Conqueror ever taſted, but ſuch as the Martyrs have felt, and the Confeſſors enjoy'd, and have confeſſed they were greater then their pains, and harder to bear, and ſome of them have died of Love and Joys, who ſurviv'd all their torments and outliv'd their pains, but Love was ſtronger then Death, and overcame Life and it to, and carried them on

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its Flames to Eternal Triumphs and Glory, to behold that beauty face to face, whom they loved ſo much, and whoſe enjoyment they ſought through Flames and Death, and at laſt obtained through the Intereſt of miſeries and death, the unſpeakable advantages that attend on Sufferings and Patience in a Religion that's laviſh of Crowns and Rewards, and ſcatters Scepters, and Palms, and everlaſting Glories amongſt them that reſiſt unto blood ſtriving againſt Sin.

Of Divine Love

Nothing but Love can write of Love, 'tis all experience and joy, tranſport and Obedience, it comes from God, and returns to God, the Sovereign Beauty, the Infinite Lover, the ſource of happineſs,

neſs, and bounty, 'tis the height and quinteſſence of Religion, the happineſs of Angels, that that made the Worlds, and preſerves them from ruin, that created, redeem'd, and ſanctified Mankind; that Makes Religion Charming, and Duty pleaſure, and Obedience Liberty; that refines the ſoul, and purifies the body, the great Enemy of Hypocriſie and Rebellion, that that makes us Noble and ſincere, humble and Great, eaſie, reſolute, and Conſtant, that enflam'd the Martyrs, and preſerv'd the Confeſſors, 'tis that heaven that waits not for death, but mingles with this mortal life, and comes down upon it in ſhowers of tranſport and illapſes of joy, and tumulous uneaſie happineſſes, that rend us with their greatneſs, that are fierce and violent, and act like Pangs and Agonies, and the Face of Heaven is covered with Tempeſts while the joy is

too great for a Calm, and ferments into Storms and Violence.

Oh Sacred Paſſion! Oh Divine Pain! Oh ſweeteſt Pleaſure! food of Angels! reward of Martyrs! conſolation of the humble! how ſhall we be ſatisfied with thy delights! when ſhall we be transform'd into thee! when we have found thee, we have found Heaven, when we enjoy thee, we enjoy all things, even God himſelf; for God is Love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him; he is raviſht with Beauty, and filled with Love, and ſatisfied with Knowledge, and deſires nothing more, but to love and ſuffer more for the infinite Beloved, to be always doing that that pleaſes him moſt and to be humble to the utmoſt, becauſe, that pleaſes him moſt to adore his Beauty, and to imitate his Love, and to know his Will, and to perform it with ardour, and to hate

hate his own, and to love Mankind, who bears the Image of the Infinite Beloved, and is ſtill longing for the Beatifick and Eternal Viſion, that graſps in it all Happineſs, and draws after it all Joys, where millions of Angels are fixt in an everlaſting extaſie, and gaze, and love out eternal Ages, ſinging Hallelujahs, and Glory, and Love, to the Sovereign Beauty for ever and ever.

Of Mortification.

LEt no man pretend to love Pleaſure that does not love the Practice of Mortification, both of Body and Mind, hence the Health, hence the Purity, hence the Beauty and the Joy of both. By this we conquer Earth, in order to the conqueſt of Heaven, by this we conquer our ſelves firſt, and then our Enemies, by it we refind all that's fooliſh and miſ-

miſchievous in the World, the oppreſſions of Gluttony, and the deluges of Intemperance, and the vanity of Pride, and the unreaſonableneſs of Covetouſneſs, and the paleneſs of Envy, and the ſtupidity of Cunning, and the loſſes of Diſhoneſty, and the poverty of Oppreſſion. It ſets us quite above this World and all that's mortal or corruptible; and in order to clear the way to a firm, and pure, and laſting Happineſs, it cuts off all the falſeſt Pretences to it, as Luſt, and Ambition, Luxury, and Power, and fixes it in that that is ſpiritual and everlaſting, fitted to the greatneſs and duration of the Soul, in Divine Love and Devotion, in Chaſtity, and forgiving injuries, in humility and a true Ambition, in Wiſdom and Goodneſs, in Temperance and Generoſity, in Patience and Crowns, in Faith and Everlaſting Kingdoms, and makes us greater

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then *Cæſars* or Conſuls, and gives us better Tryumphs, and chaſes us to nobler Conqueſts; by it the Soul is raiſed to its true Glory, made wiſe and ſtrong, noble and clean, active and ambitious, humble and great, diſcerns, purſues, and overtakes its intereſt, and ſeizes on Eternal Glories.

And whoever conſiders the emptineſs of the things of this World, how falſe and uncertain, how trifling and vain, how diſappointing and ſad, will ſoon be convinc'd that he can employ his time in nothing more advantageous then in ſubduing the Follies and Miſeries of the World, and retrenching all that's hurtful to the Body and Soul, and bringing each to their proper nouriſhment and ſtint, and in effect, Mortification is nothing elſe but a cutting off whatever is a hindrance or an enemy to our true Happineſs, and where is the harm or

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the loſs in all this? by Temperance we cut off Dropſies and Fevers, and almoſt the whole liſt of Diſtempers, that wait on our follies, and puniſh our exceſſes by Humility, the ſtorms and the rages of an incens'd Pride, that's torn with affronts, and rack't with contempt, and rive the miſerable man that's ſubject to the mercileſs and Cruel diſtemper; and he that's loving and kind, eſcapes the whips and ſnakes of Envy, and conſuming Malice, that live upon the blood, and feed on the very Vitals, and conſume the ſpirits, and fret him into a Skelliton and vex him to a Ghoſt.

By Chaſtity we eſcape the Convulſions, the pollutions, the diſgraces, and the diſtempers of Luſt, that Wars againſt the Soul that Enemy of it's Crown and Glory, that ſubdues it's beauty, and darkens it's faculties, and cloggs it's ſoar, and conceals Hea-

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ven, and overcaſts the glorious proſpect, and ſullies all it's bright deſigns, that turns the Soul into body, and the body into Beaſt; and to conclude, Mortification, by which I mean that of the Soul as well as that of the body, is the removal of every miſery, and the Introduction of every Joy.

Of Charity.

WHoever is a Lover of himſelf, muſt be a Lover of this duty, that in the end tends ſo much to our own intereſt, tho that ought not to be our deſign; while I become my Brothers friend, I render God mine, and Heaven, and everlaſting Kingdomes are the unſpeakable Rewards of a charitable Religion, and he, who will not practice this duty, is reſolv'd to do nothing for himſelf, that is, he is re-

reſolved to manage his Intereſts without the bleſſing of God, or the aſſiſtance of his Neighbours, he will neither do good nor receive good, he forſakes the intereſt of Mankind, and is forſaken of Mankind, he will act by himſelf, and periſh by himſelf, he will take care for one, and will be that one, the World will take no care at all of.

He has rejected the beſt Principle in Nature or Religion, that which makes Heaven and Earth happy, that by which the Angels are Angels, and that for want of which Devils are Devils, he has ſeparated himſelf from the whole Creation, and excluded himſelf from the common Providence of the World, he has broken out from Society, and that Commonwealth, that ties the World, and ſits a ſingle Creation and Government by himſelf, and will proſper only from himſelf,

ſelf, and by himſelf, without any regard to a common good or a mutual aſſiſtance, he has diveſted himſelf of all the Sentiments of a tender Humanity, and of that Love, without which no Man can be happy.

But the Charitable Man on the other hand is good and happy as an Angel, is acted by Heaven and Love, and differs little from the Angels, as he was made but a little lower than they, and comes as near the life of Heaven, as a mortal Body will let him, and acts by that principle which alone gives Happineſs to Mankind; he loves, and while he does ſo, is obliged to be happy, and his Soul is charm'd with the brighteſt pleaſures, and the pureſt Joys, and over-flows with that paſſion, that is it ſelf very joy, and the very life and heaven of the Soul, its greateſt duty and its greateſt reward; 'tis more than

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eaſe and peace, 'tis poſitive happineſs, and a ſubſtantial pleaſure, that makes every thing delightful and entertaining, that's good or innocent, and in that degree we converſe with it, we converſe with Heaven, and have reacht all the Perfection our Souls are capable of in this Life, for there is nothing higher or happier than Love, for God himſelf is that excellent thing, by it he created and rules the World, and wherever it is in its full perfection, there is Heaven; this the Angels experience in their miniſteries here below, while they come down with breaſts flaming with Charity and Love, bringing their Heaven with them, that is a boundleſs love to God and Man.

Of

Of Humility.

HUmility is the Foundation of Religion, the Pillar of Virtue, the ſecurity of a good Life, the Duty and the Wiſdom of a Man, the terror of the Devil, the reſtorer of the Humane Nature, and the great Example of the Son of God. This is it reſtores the broken Penitent, and and recovers the Laps'd, and ſecures the Faithful, that puts Temptations to Flight, and the Tempter too, that charmes the Angels, and is admired by Men, and pleads with God, and obtains Heaven, and reſcues from Eternal ruine.

Is any Man Ambitious? Let him be Humble, and he ſhall be as great as he can deſire: O may the ſame minde be in us all, which was

was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himſelf of no reputation, for which God alſo hath highly exalted him, there is nothing truely Great, but Humility, or truely mean, and deſpicable, and little, but Pride: though Humility deſcend to the bottom of the loweſt Vallies, yet it riſes to the utmoſt bounds of the everlaſting Hills, crowning the Penitent and the Confeſſor with eternal Wreaths of Glory, and the Valley of tears becomes fruitful and glorious as the Garden of *Eden*, and from the River of Tears that iſſues thence, is the whole World refreſht. Whoever would be truly wiſe, let him be truely humble and he ſhall be ſo. Whoever would be truely happy, let him be truely humble, and he ſhall be ſo. Whoever would be ſecure from all evils

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ſpiritual and temporal, let him be truly humble, and he ſhall be ſo; let him that loves peace love humility, for from pride only cometh War; it avoids all things, it obtains all things, it guards, it comforts, it releives, it ſtrengthens, and gives Palms and Crowns. The Angels wait upon't, and before it fly Legions and Millions of the Evil Spirits. Heaven is always open to it, and by it the vaſt aſcent is rendred eaſie and ſafe, and the dangerous road of life, ſecure. The Eye, and the favour, and the Light of the countenance of God is always upon't, to reſcue, to cheriſh, and to Crown all its ſufferings, and contempts, and labours, it's perſecutions and toils from the folly and the wickedneſs of men and Devils, and ſecures it's road to eternal Kingdoms, and to the flaming Courts of Glory, and to him, who for the joy that was ſet

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before him, and for our Salvation, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is now ſet down at the right hand of God, and in the Majeſty of the Father, exalting that nature of ours in which he humbled himſelf above Heaven and Earth, and at whoſe Name the whole Creation bows.

If this duty of humility were in it's full practice in the world, how great would be the peace of Mankind, how would Storms and Wars ceaſe, Ambition and Revenge ſleep, and the rage of the Conquerour, and the terrors of the Invader: This one Virtue would ſupply the uſe of Laws, and the neceſſity of Sanctions, would take away the Judge and the Executioner, the Officer, and an untimely death, the Oppreſſor and the Tyrant, and Peace and Love would adminiſter the World, and Umpire all the differences in it, and Furv would be

be no more; nor the Shield, nor the Sword, nor the Battle. The Tyrant and the Virgin, the Conqueror and the Infant, the King and the Helpleſs would Sit down in equal ſtrengths and ſecurity, and the power of the Strong would be the guard and protection of the Weak, and the defence of the helpleſs and of the trembling Maid.

To this duty would be owing all the happineſſes and joys of friendſhip, and an unbroken Love of Mutual Offices, and Rival Services, which are all interrupted, broken, and diſper'ſt by the quarrels, and exceptions of Pride, and an unſociable Honor, and a Malancholy Ambition, and by a Peeviſh Solitary Haughtineſs, which is the bane of Society aud Happineſs, and of all that's innocent or chearful in the World.

By it the Trumpet and Alarm,

larm, would be turn'd into the Pipe, and the Tabret, and the Harp; and the Shrieks of the Slain, and the Groans of the Battle, into the Songs of Virgins, and the Smiles of Peace. And the Panther would be a Lamb, and the Conſul and the Admiral would quit the Seas and the Field, and eat the Bread of Peace, and drink the Wine of Love. And Armies would diſperſe, and Fleets would ſerve the Merchant, for want of Cruel and Ambitious Leaders, of *Luxemburgs* and *Tourvils*, of *Catanetts* and *D'eſtrees*.

To Humility would be owing all the Eaſe of Life, and undifficulty of living happy, for Humility would add Greatneſs and Content, to that condition which the haughty Man can't live on, 'twould make us always thankful and Glad, and to find reſt every where, and turn the pain-

Painful ſoar, and the weary Climbe into the eaſineſs of a deſcent, and a Fall that's receiv'd on a Bed of Down, 'twould make the Servant as happy as the Lord, and by how much the more contented, by ſo much the happier. And in that degree that Ambition racks the mind, and Pride makes every thing troubleſome and uneaſie, in the ſame degree does Humility make all quiet and Eaſie, and gives ſleep to the Soul that was tortur'd with Ambition, and burſt with Pride.

It fixes the Man in his Condition, and he ſeeks no farther, he would for his eaſe fall yet lower, but for a Crown would not riſe higher, if he is conſtant to his wiſdom and his happineſs, and virtue. And there he ſafely beholds, and at a ſecure diſtance, the Riſes and the Falls of the Ambitious man, his Rocks, his precipices,

and his plunges, now hanging on the top of the craggy Precipice, then loſing his deſperate hold falling down head long into the Abyſs and bottom of infamy and deſpair, there wallowing in his ruin.

It makes all ſafe and firm about us as there is nothing lower, ſo there is nothing ſecurer; 'tis even and conſtant, and as it has no floods, ſo it has no ebbs, 'tis a happineſs equally diffus'd over the face of life, and above all other duties of Religion moſt ſecures to us the Favour and the protection of God, and is moſt remarkable in the Example, and precepts, and life of Chriſt, who deſcended from the higheſt Glory, to the loweſt condition of humane nature; he himſelf has ſet us the vaſt coppy, and has liv'd before us that we ſhould follow his Example and rewards, and what can Kings or Emperors do greater then follow

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ſo great a Leader, him by whom both the worlds were made, and was above all Scepters and Purples, and yet took upon him the Form of a ſervant, and made himſelf of no reputation, and humbled himſelf even to the death of the Croſs, who at the ſame time thought it no robbery to be equal with God. And what greater example can they propoſe to themſelves, and after his authority, what can be judg'd ſo truly great, as to be truly Humble, and like the Infinite Jeſus, who taught us by his life, and bought us with his death, who laid aſide all his Glory and all his happineſs for the ſalvation of man, and Oh that Mankind that was redeemed and ſaved with ſo much humility and condeſcention, would imitate the great Example, and that none would think that mean, that was made great in the life of the Holy Jeſus, and was the great Aſſiſtant towards our Salvation.

Of Prudence.

THis is ſo neceſſary a Virtue, that without it all the other Virtues will quickly wither and decay, 'tis the Strength, and Band, and Guard, and Overſeer of all the other virtues, without it we ſhall but do and undo, and Imprudence will put us as far back, as Zeal will ſet us forward. And here I ſhall relate a famous paſſage of *Antony* the famous *Hermit* of *Egypt*, that Angel of the Deſert, and of whom St. *Hierome* writes with ſo much praiſe, and ſo much admiration, while he himſelf for four years together led that life, accompanied only by Angels and wild Beaſts, and Prayers, and Faſts, and Hymns, and ſacred Books, and probably had ſpent his whole life in thoſe Deſerts of *Syria*,

ria, whither he retir'd from the world, to live in a clearer view of Heaven, and in ſtronger Contemplations of virtue, and ſafer from the incurſions and Devaſtations of the Enemy the world, and in a cloſer fellowſhip with Angels, had not the Arrian Inquiſitors forc'd him from his Retreat, and from thoſe Quires of Angels with which he ſays, he ſometimes though himſelf ſurrounded, and diſturbed his peaceful Empire, and his loneſome Reign.

The paſſage is this, Many Holy Men aſſembled themſelves once at the Cell of great *Anthony*, to adviſe with him what were the moſt efficacious and ſecure means to arrive at the perfection of a Holy Life, and a compleat Virtue and Happineſs: and when the debate had laſted from Evening almoſt to Morning, each diſcourſing earneſtly

and long on the ſubject, in order to diſcover the ſhorteſt and the ſafeſt road to happineſs and an entire Virtue, and when each had delivered his different Judgment, one Judging it chiefly to conſiſt in faſting and watching, while by theſe means the mind being purified, and cleans'd, and rais'd, it might the more eaſily unite it ſelf to God, others plac't it in an entire throwing off the World, and all its intereſts, and cares, and interruptions, that ſo the mind being looſe and diſingag'd from thoſe cloggs and impediments, that hang like weighrs about her and keep her down from her true happineſs, may with a quicker flight, and a freer ſoar reach its long'd for happineſs and perfection. Others the Deſart, and an Immence Solitude, and the Sacred Horrors of the Wilderneſs, and an unbroken Silence,

lence, where the Soul has nothing elſe to do, but ſeize directly on its happineſs, by ſtrong and perfect Contemplations, by pure and conſtant prayer, and an uninterrupted Holineſs, and a Heaven broke in upon Life, clear'd from all the ſtormes aud ſhipwracks, the dangers and the impertinencies, the cruel miſeries and more cruel pleaſures, the falſe joys and the ſincere ſorrows, of a miſerable, uncertain, and confus'd world, thats made up of noiſe, and ſhew, and ruin. Others ſaid it lay chiefly in Charity and good Works, and that our Saviour ſeems in a manner to appropriate the Kingdome of Heaven to the practice of this Duty, and when moſt of the night had been ſpent in delivering their ſeveral Judgments, on this great ſubject, *Intulit demum Beatus Antonius*, at laſt the Bleſſed *Anto-*

ny, the Angel of the Deſart began, I grant ſays he, that all thoſe things you have nam'd are not onely Good and Holy, but alſo highly neceſſary to be practis'd by all that ſeek the Glories of the other World, but the many miſcarriages, and the ſad and mournful ruin of many great Men formerly and lately, and within our own knowledge will no way allow me to give any of them the chief place on this occaſion, for have we not known ſeveral that after having exceeded in theſe duties, that have faſted themſelves to Skellitons, and having given themſelves wholly up to prayer and to watching, even to the exceeding the powers of Nature, to Hymns and Praiſes, and reacht the utmoſt Perfection of Humanity, and Charity, that they were the wonder and admiration of all Men, and a Glorious Spectacle to Angels

Angels and to Men, yet all of a ſuddain, and to the Terror and Horror of the Deſart; we have ſeen them after ſo long and glorious a Courſe, after the Labours, and the Improvements, and the Victories, and the Wonders of ſo many years, when we had reverenc'd them as Angels, whoſe Lives they had ſo nearly coppied, and who ſeem'd to us, to be at the ſame time in Heaven and the body too, yet by horrid and miſerable deluſions, and by the ſtratagems of the ſubtle and Inviſible Enemy, all of a ſuddain, thrown down from the heights of Glory and Happineſs, to the very bottom and Abyſs of Ruin and loſs, and the Glorious Life that had been carried on for ſo many years, and with ſo much admiration, and even to a very old age by ſome, (Witneſs Old *Heron* the Hermit, the Glory and the Hor-

ror of this Deſart, whom you have all admir'd and wept) extinguiſht in a hydeous and an amazing death, all blotted and ſpoild by miſerable deluſions, and the wiles of the dark and execrable Foe. Therefore the way to diſcover what that is that beſt promotes, and perfects, and Secures our Religion and Paſſage to God and a better World, is to find out the cauſe of the ruin and miſcarriage of theſe Great Men. 'tis certain that the want of diſcretion alone was the utter loſs and ruin of them, which directs us always to keep the middle path, and avoid extreams of both hands, not to exceed in Virtue it ſelf, or go too faſt to Heaven it ſelf, but to do Juſtice to Nature and the Body, which elſe, one time or other, will have their Arrears in the exceſſes of a ſcandalouss intemperance and Debauch, in miſerable

ble Libertiniſme, and excurſions from the former ſtrictneſs and ſeverity of life; nor of the other hand, under the pretence of doing Juſtice to the body, and the demands of Nature, to laſh out into exceſs and riot, Diſcretion is that which in the Goſpel is call'd the Eye and the Light of the body, which our Saviour ſayes, if it be ſingle the whole body ſhall be full of light, but if evil the whole ſhall be full of darkneſs, for this being the Guide and Director of all our actions, if it been't fortified with a true Judgment and an exact Wiſdom, the whole Man ſhall be overrun with error and vice, for it ſelf being dark and blind, it neceſſarily follows that all that depends upon it's directions, muſt be ſubject to the utmoſt ruin and miſcarriage, to thispurpoſe, and with the approbation of all, ſpake the incar-

nate

ate Angells, who was well verſt in all the various arts of Satan to ruin Virtue, and to overſet a well-meaning, but an imprudent Zeal and Religion. Thus ſpake he, who had grappled with him alone for ſo many Years together in the dreadful conflicts of the Deſart, who had obſerv'd all the turnings, and windings of the Serpent, and who was throughly skild in the policies and ſtrength of the adverſary; and whoever conſiders the Nature of Religion, and the deſignes of the Enemy, and his own weakneſs, will quickly allow that there is nothing to be done, that will laſt long, and endure to the end, without the utmoſt aſſiſtance of this Virtue of *Prudence*, that muſt at the ſame time overſee the work of Religion, and keep an Eye on the Enemy, thats alwaies attacking us with ſtratagem and force, with *Power* and Addreſs, and has made

made ſuch miſerable Breaches in the greateſt Men, that ſeem'd to be the Forts and Bulwarks of *Religion*, how has he power'd in Ruin upon them, on the firſt diſcovery of a weak place, and the works that were ſo long a rearing, and with ſo much pains carried of, on a ſuddain demolliſht and thrown down, or ſo miſerably ſhatter'd, and broke, that nothing but the Infinite Mercy and Goodneſs of God, whoſe Compaſſions never fail, and of whoſe Goodneſs there is no end, could ever repair them again, and who is alwaies ready to the aſſiſtance and deliverance of thoſe Faithful *Souldiers* that fight Manfully in his ſervice, tho they fall they ſhall not be caſt away, for the Lord ſupporteth and raiſeth them with his pitty, yea even as a Father pities his own *Son*.

But a ſpiritual prudence with the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God would

would have prevented the wound, and ſore bruiſe, and the ſad fall, would have kept the happy Man, ſtill happy in an uninterrupted joy, in a clear view of Heaven, and in the direct road to it: a Holy Prudence would have prevented the labours and the ſorrows, the Travel and the Throes of a bitter repentance, that's like the ſetting of a broken arm, or a hard Eſcape after a ſhipwrack, or the condition of the Man in the Goſpell, that was left half dead on the road by the Highway-men, we cannot be too circumſpect againſt our own weakneſs, and againſt the warineſs and ſtrength of the Enemy, who is alwaies awake, and projecting, and acting, who never grudges us his malice or his pains, who alwaies ſtands in the dark to us, and we in the light to him, who has the parts of an Angel, and the wickedneſs of what he is, whoſe

whoſe skill in holy thiugs is great, and uſe of them execrable, while he plaid the Scriptures againſt *Jeſus* and batter'd him, as it were, from Heaven, and no doubt but he often takes our ruin too out of the Scriptures, who have not that infinite preſence of mind to anſwer and ſtun him, that *Jeſus*, who is God bleſſed for ever, had, who thunder'd upon him out of the ſame Scriptures, which he had polluted and deſecrated by quoting 'em to ſuch deſperate and infernal purpoſes; and our Holy Saviour, our Infinite Friend, the Captain of our Salvation, the Great Leader and General of the Chriſtians, ſeems to have given way to the Tempter, only to inſtruct and diſcipline his Souldiers in the Arts of foiling him, to teach them how to grapple with the Powers of Darkneſs, and to return Scripture for Scripture, and while he endeavours

to

to poyſon us out of the very Fountains of Life, to give him of the ſame Waters till he burſt, and to aſſert their Holy meaning while he debauches them with his Gloſs, and while he is flying the fiery Darts at us, to cut him down with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying alwayes with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and crying out to the God of Help, who is mighty to ſave, and who views the Battle, and pitties our wounds, and binds them up himſelf with the Bowels of a Father, and then Crowns us with Garlands and Joys, with Lawrels and Glory; and when we have ſufficiently ſweated and bled, tranſlates us to Palaces and everlaſting Kingdomes, where the Martyr bleeds no more, and where the ſecret and unprais'd Labours of the Confeſſor are di-

vulg'd

vulg'd and crown'd, in the preſence of Myriads of flaming Spirits, who congratulate his humble and vanquiſh'd miſeries, while the glorious Martyr aſcended to Heaven, born up by Acclamations and Triumph, and had a quicker paſſage into the Boſom of Glory, and the Manſions of Rewards, and to the General of his Salvation, who ſaw him fighting and dying in his Cauſe, and expireing under the Banner of the Croſs, and deputed Angels to receive and conduct his Glorious Soul to live and Triumph for ever in the Kingdomes of Glory.

Of the Advantages of the Great, in Reſpect of Religion and its Rewards.

WHen I conſider the Glorious and Immortal Rewards of Vertue and Religion, I cannot but conclude them happieſt, who are in the beſt circumſtances for obtaining, (by the Goodneſs and Mercy of God) the largeſt ſhare of them, ſuch as Kings and Princes, and thoſe who act in the moſt eminent Stations under them, whoſe Examples may turn Millions to Righteouſneſs, and themſelves ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever, for ſetting the happy Example by the Grace of God given them, without which no man whatſoever can live, or move, or have his Being, as a Chriſtian.

What

What ſhall I ſay of *Theodoſius* the Emperor, and to what ſhall I equal his Glory, and his Life, ſo full of Triumph and wonders, who was perfect Emperor, and perfect Hermit; right Ancient Roman, and right Primitive Chriſtian: *Claudian* ſays he was too much belov'd of Heaven, and that the Winds and the Seas were confederate to his Glory, and better Hiſtorians than a Poet ſay, the Stars in their courſes fought againſt his Enemies, and that the Winds blew under his Banners, and ſerv'd under him in Storms, and ſwept the Foe, like that ancient River of *Kiſhon*. He was in Battle like a deſtroying Angel, and in private Faſted and Prayed like a Saint.

The following Memoir of him, if not authentick, yet is very entertaining. 'Tis ſaid a certain Hermit had liv'd forty years in the Deſart, retir'd wholly from the World, and

and applying himself with great care and earnestness to the salvation of his Soul, a desire at length enter'd into his mind to know if any exceeded him in humble Mortification, whereupon he desir'd God to reveal it to him, that he might follow his Example and 'twas answer'd him that the Emperor *Theodosius*, notwithstanding that he was Master of the greatest Glory in the World, was not inferiour to him in Humility, or in overcoming himself. The Hermit with this answer, repair'd to the Imperial Court, where he had easie access to the Courteous and Religious Emperor, to whom the Servants of God, such as were famous for sanctity of life, were alwaies welcome, not long after he found means to speak to him, and to know his secret Religious Life, and his Holy Exercises.

At first he only acquainted him that

that he gave large Alms, that he kept under his Body by diſcreet auſterities, that he obſerv'd Matrimonial Chaſtity, and that he caus'd Juſtice to be diſtributed exactly. Theſe things ſeem'd well to the Hermit, eſpecially in ſo great a Man, but ſtill humbly thought he had gone as far himſelf, if not farther; for he had renounc'd all, and given away all he poſſeſt for the ſake of Chriſt, which he thought was more then to give part in Alms, he never knew woman in his life, which he thought was more then the obſervance of Conjugal Chaſtity, he never did injury or injuſtice to any, which was more than to cauſe it to be kept towards others, his abſtinence from what ever was pleaſant or delightful, was continual and uninterrupted, which he modeſtly judg'd was more

then to abſtain and mortifie at certain times, ſo that ſomething unſatisfi'd at this account, he humbly importun'd the Emperor to conceal nothing from him, and that it was the Divine will he ſhould do ſo, the Emperor thus importun'd, ſaid to him. 'Know then that when 'I aſſiſt at the Horſe Courſes, 'and other Entertainments in 'the Circus where my preſence 'is expected, I ſo withdraw 'my mind from thoſe glori-'ous vanities, and Enemies of 'true happineſs and wiſdome, 'that though my Eyes be open, 'and I ſeem to look on them, 'yet I ſee them not, but em-'ploy my ſelf inwardly and 'ſecretly in the midſt of ſo 'much ſhew and noiſe, and va-'nity, and Crowd, on objects 'much greater and happier, 'and that exceed all the vain

'and

'and melancholy noiſe,& glory,
'and ſhew of this World; with
'Glories and Happineſſes which
'the giddy and uncertain Peo-
'ple neither gave me nor can
'take from me, and when their
'Entertainments are at an end,
'mine are not, but rather in-
'creas'd and enlarg'd, by the re-
'moval of thoſe Enemies of true
'Joy and Happineſs.

The Hermit remain'd aſtoniſht at this ſort of Deſart, and at this ſort of Mortification, which he readily granted was beyond all his life, and any thing he could pretend to.

'Know alſo ſaid the Emperor
'that I live by my Labour, for I
'tranſcribe certain parchments
'in a fair hand, which being
'ſold the price pays for my food.
With this Example of Poverty in the midſt of ſo great riches, and ſuch Temperance in the midſt

midſt of ſo much affluence, that under Purples and Empire, and all the Labours and Tryumphs of the war, and the harder trials of a ſoft, and treacherous, a luxurious, and diſpiriting Peace, he wore the hardſhips and poverty, the neceſſities and humility of a private man. The Hermit was perfectly amaz'd, and ſatisfi'd that the Throne ſtood as near Heaven as the Deſart, and that the wondrous Emperor and he, were about the ſame buſineſs. The Truth of all this in ſubſtance is affirm'd to us by the beſt accounts of this Great Man, who was Good and Courteous as a Seraphim, Humble and Auſtere, as this or any other Hermit.

If he ſurpaſt this wondrous Inhabitant of the Deſart, and at the ſame fill'd all the duties of an Emperor, a Father and a General,

General, who ſhall doubt to prefer this Man, this Maſter and Servant, this Lord and Vaſſal of Mankind, that ſweats and bends under the weight of a Crown, and at the ſame time toils in all the duties of a private Chriſtian, to the loneſom Man, that converſes only with Angels and Tygers, and eats with the wild Aſs and the Leopard, and ſleeps with the Serpent, and watches with the Stars, tho he were paler than the Moon, or leaner then an Italian Harlot, or humble as his Cell, or conſtant to his Duty as the Rock he lives in to his place, or roar'd in his Repentance, like the Waves of the neighbouring Sea, in its hollow bottome: For ſtill he ſaves and ſerves but one, and is undiſturb'd as the Lyon of the Wilderneſs, that never hears the

roar of the Hunter, and beholds he Storm from his Cave in which the World is torn and driven, where he ſleeps and wakes like an Inhabitant of another World, while the Prince and the Publick Man, the Emperor and the King toil for the preſervation of the World, and ride Admirals in the Storm, and ſet their Faces againſt the Tempeſt and the Winds, and their hands to the Helm; and while the Hermit is ſaving his ſingle ſtake, they are toiling for all Mankind, and are ready to periſh themſelves to ſave the World, and the innumerable paſſengers committed to their care, and if the Hermit prays for the whole World which he has wholly forſaken, ſo does the Emperour or the Queen, and works in the Storm too, which the Hermit does not, thats

that's departed, hugging his Plank, and tryumphing in a ſingle Salvation; while his Brethren are ſinking in the Ship he has quitted, and which perhaps his help would have ſaved.

Surely Kings and Queens are they, who by turning many to righteouſneſs ſhall themſelves ſhine like the Stars for ever and ever, they ſhall riſe like the Martyrs from the toils and the labours of Empire, to eternal Crowns, and everlaſting Kingdomes, to Reign and Triumph in earneſt, whereas on Earth they were but as the Servants of Mankind, and Miniſters of the common Good, they were glorious as Generals and Admirals, as Governours and Lieutenants, under the great Adminiſtrator of the World, but the Harveſt and the Tryumph is not til death, 'til they are broke

with Cares and conſum'd with Empire, and cruſht into their Graves by the weight of their Crowns and Purples, 'til their hands are gall'd with holding the Scepter as the labouring Mans with the Spade, 'til their Minds are ſpent into Epilepſis and Appoplexes, and ſuſpenſion of thought and life, 'til they are conſum'd with Counſels and Fears, with Watchings and Concern, and at laſt like St. *Paul* are offered up a Sacrifice on the Service of us all.

And now what ſhall I ſay of the glorious Reward of ſo much Labour and Martyrdom, of ſo much Care and Death, ſuch as the ſtorm'd Mariner, nor the bloody Plain ever knew, for their Contentions are fierce but ſhort, and their Labours die in a ſhort ſtrugling, and a few hours, and are preſently crown'd again

again with Songs and Mirth, with Tabret and Harp, with ſoft and eaſie Joys, ſuch as never come near the Throne, or dwell upon the Temples of Kings.

Of true Wiſdom.

HOw much the Wiſdom of the World, and true Wiſdom differ may be ſeen by that expreſſion of Scripture, If any Man in this World ſeemeth to be wiſe, let him become a fool, that he may be wiſe; that is, let him purſue a Wiſdom that's quite oppoſite to that of the World, and is therefore reputed folly by it. That inſtead of Manageing the interests of this life to the beſt ad-

vanage, and purſuing Worldly honors and Pleaſures, teaches to deſpiſe them all, and to hold Nothing for Our Intereſt, but Eternal Happineſs, Eternal Honour, and Eternal Advantages, and bids us look on the utmoſt that can be made of this life, as impertinence and loſs, as labour and toil to no purpoſe, as an improveing a leſs miſery to a greater, as a making our ſelves that with a great deal of Art, and Induſtry, that we may be by nature, and to our hands.

And therefore directs us to quite other courſes from thoſe of Human Wiſdom, it bids us purſue that that will anſwer our pains, and by Methods, that will Demonſtrate our Wiſdom, things that will laſt as long as God, and Heaven, and our Souls, that are as big as

our

our Hopes. and as long as Eternity, that are rational, Clean, and Subſtantial, that comfort ſollidly, and that will outlaſt a dream, or a fancy, or a miſtake, and will be found within and about the Soul, at the end of a Thouſand Ages, Warmeing and Tranſporting, Cheriſhing and Raviſhing it for ever, that outlaſt the World and all its Pageantry, that are worthy of the Power and Bounty of God, and for which the Son of God Himſelf endur'd the Croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame, and is now ſet down in the eternal poſſeſſion at the right hand of the Father.

Surely this is Wiſdom, to propoſe and compaſs that that ſatisfies the thirſt of Angels, and then which Fancy and Extravagance can think of nothing greater or longer, and

that

that at the price of the labours of a few Years, and a ſhort Life; it may be a few Daies, or a few Houres, join'd to the Infinite Value of our Saviours Blood, that gives all the value to what we do or ſuffer, for what can be too Generous for an Infinite Love, or what recompence too Great, for the Blood of the Son of God, that was enough to redeem as many Worlds as Men.

The Honours we ſecure by the Goodneſs of God, are to become the Sons of God, and Heirs of God, and Joint heirs with Chriſt, the Society of Angels, and the Loves of Cherubims, the Embraces of Archangels, and the Friendſhip of the Prophets, to behold the Tryumphs of the Martyrs, and our own, if we have ſuffered (by the aſſiſtance of God) much

much and well, but eſpecially of thoſe that were rackt upon the Throne, and were Tort ur'd in Purples and Ermin, and dy'd of the Publick Good, and of the common Salvation, whom Empires and Care had diſpatch'd, and the ingratitude and folly of a rude and giddy People, that rega'd neither the Honour nor the Labours of a Crown. Such as the Firſt *Charls* of the Engliſh, who the Author of the Supplement to *Davilah*'s Hiſtory of *France*, (a wiſe Venetian) ſays was a Patern for all Princes, except in his Opinion, for he was himſelf unreform'd in his. How vaſt was his Religion? And how great were his Troubles? who can tell his Patience but the Holy Spirit that ſupply'd it? Whom did he provoke? and how was he provok'd? he forgave

the wickedneſs of his Enemies, while they refuſe to forgive his Vertues, he was great, and humble, and Good, and Miſerable, and Holy, and perſcuted, *Sic occulos, Sic ille manus, Sic ora ferebat.* And in all things follow'd the Example of his Prince and Saviour, and was Numbred amongſt the Tranſgreſſors, in his Humiliation his Judgmeut was taken away, he was taken from Priſon and from Judgment, and who ſhall declare his ſorrows. He was cut off from the land of the living, he made his grave with the wicked, becauſe he had done no Violence, neither was any deceit found in his Mouth. But he now ſees of the travail and of the ſorrows of his Righteous Soul, and is ſatisfi'd for ever, *Et te Catalina minaci pendentem Scopulo, Furiarumque*

arumque Oratrementem, I Decius! I, Noſtrum! Meliorihus utere Fatis! ſhine forth for ever, like the Son in the Kingdom of the Father, let him Tryumph for ever above, with *Conſtantine*, and *Theodoſius*, and with our own Moſt Holy *Edward*, and ſo great a Digreſſion was due to ſo Great a Memory, who ſhall make our Hiſtories Mourn, and our Annals Sad and Horrid for ever. And they that read his Tragedy will weep, and Poſterity will mourn over ſo much Miſery for no other reaſon but becauſe he was Holy, and Juſt, and Good, *& Servantiſſimus æqui.*

But to return, True Wiſdom will direct us to the proper means, for the ſecuring the Higheſt Ends, 'twill labour with us, and be with us, 'twill enable

e nable us, and aſſiſt us, 'twill Direct and Conduct us, and at laſt Enſtate us in the Eternal Glories we purſu'd, and without it, we ſhall dwell upon every folly, and run after every miſtake, and obey our Fancy, and miſs both our way and our End. We ſhall purſue our ruin with labour and ſorrow, and walk in darkneſs and Error and every ſtep will be a fall, and every fall a bruiſe, and we ſhall tumble from one precipice to another, till at laſt, we have accompliſh't our ſorrows, and perfected our ruin. But True Wiſdom, which is the Gift of God alone, will ſecure us from all this miſery and folly, and will lead us through Happineſs to Happineſs, through a Glorious Way to a Glorious End, for her ways are ways of Pleaſantneſs,

neſs, and all her paths are peace, ſhe is a Tree of life to them that lay hold on her, Happy is every one that retaineth her, ſhe is more Pretious than Rubies, and all the Things Thou canſt deſire, are not to be compared unto her.

As many as are the ruines that attend on Vice, ſo many are the deliverances we receive from Wiſdom, that's to be prefer'd to Scepters and Thrones, and in compariſon of which riches are of no eſteem, and all gold in reſpect of Her, is as a little ſand, and ſilver is no more then clay, She is beyond Health and Beauty, and the Light it ſelf, for the Light that comes from her never goes out, all good things together come with her, and ſhe is the Mother of them, for ſhe is a Treaſurer unto Men that never

failes,

failes, for thus ſhe ſpeaks of her ſelf in the Book of Wiſdom, Whatever is Deſirable, whatever is Praiſeworthy, whatever is Charming, whatever is Profitable, and Laſting, flows from her, for in her is an underſtanding Spirit, Holy, One Onely, Manifold, Subtle, Lively, Clear, Undefiled, Plain, not ſubject to hurt, Loving the thing that is good, Kind to Man, Stedfaſt, Sure, Free from care, Having all Power, ſeeing all things, and going through all, underſtanding, Pure and moſt ſubtle Spirits, for Wiſdom is more moveing than any motion, ſhe paſſeth and goeth through all things by reaſon of her pureneſs, for ſhe is the breath of the power of God, a pure Influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, therefore can no defiled thing

fall

fall into her, for ſhe is the brightneſs of the Everlaſting Light, the unſpotted Mirrour of the power of God, and the Image of his Goodneſs. And being but one, ſhe can do all things, and remaining in her ſelf, ſhe maketh all things New, and in all Ages entring into Holy Souls, ſhe maketh them friends of God, and Prophets, for God loveth none, but him that dwelleth with wiſdom, for ſhe is more Beautiful then the Sun, and above all the Order of Stars, being compared with the light, ſhe is found before it, in that ſhe is converſant with God, ſhe magnifies her Nobility, yea the Lord of all things himſelf loved her, for ſhe is privy to the Miſteries of the knowledge of God, and a Lover of his works, if riches be a poſſeſſion to be de-

deſir'd in this life, what is richer than Wiſdom, that worketh all things, and if prudence work, who of all that are, is a more cunning workman then ſhe? and if a man love righteouſneſs, her labours are Virtues, for ſhe teacheth Temperance and Prudence, Juſtice and Fortitude, which are ſuch things, as men can have nothing more profitable in this life, if a man deſire much Experience, ſhe knoweth things of old, and conjecture th aright things to come, ſhe knoweth the ſubtilties of ſpeeches, and can expound dark Sentences, Wiſdom is glorious, and never fadeth away, who ſo ſeeketh her early, ſhall have no great travell, to think therefore upon her, is perfection of Wiſdom, and whoſo watcheth for her, ſhall quickly be without

out Care, for ſhe goeth about ſeeking ſuch as are worthy of her, ſheweth her ſelf favourably to them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought. For the very beginning of her, is the deſire of diſcipline, and the care of diſcipline, is Love, and Love is the keeping of her Laws, and the giving heed to her Laws, is the aſſurance of incorruption, and incorruption maketh us near unto God. Wiſdom was with thee which knoweth thy works, and was preſent with thee, when thou madeſt the World, and knew what was acceptable in thy ſight, and right in thy Commandments, for ſo the ways of them that liv'd on the Earth were reformed, and Men, were taught the things that are pleaſing to God, and were ſaved through Wiſdom

thu

thus Wiſdom of her ſelf, whoſe fetters are a ſtrong defence, and whoſe chains are a Robe of Glory. For there is a golden Ornament upon her, and her bands are purple lace, thou ſhalt put her on as a Robe of honour, and put her about thee as a Crown of Joy: And thus the Son of *Syrach*.

What can now be thought of? what can be deſir'd? What can be wiſh't for that Wiſdom does not in abundance ſupply us with? The Treaſures of both Worlds are from it, Temporal and eternal joys, Peace and Love, the Reſt and Triumph of the Soul, Security and Salvation, Hope and everlaſting Fruition, Crowns, and Scepters, and Kingdoms, Defence and Strength, Libertie and Power, Victory and everlaſting Extacies.

Of

Of a Virtuous Obſtinacy.

HE who can count the Ruines that flow from a weak and miſchievous Civility, from the preferring a Ceremony before our Souls, and being Comp'aiſant to being ſav'd, may count the Advantages that flow from a Wiſe and Noble Rigor, from a Manly and Chriſtian ſeverity of Manners, of Reſolution, and of Religion, that ſecures our wiſe deſigns, and perfects what we have begun, and bears down the World and it's follies, and brings the Wiſe Man ſafe to his Port, thro' Storms and Calms, thro' Rocks, and Pyrats, and Sands, thro' a falſe and an Outragious World, thro' Flatteries and Threats, thro' Cuſtom, and Faſhion, and diſ-

diſcouragement, that ſhews us the value and diſvalue of every thing, and bids us graſp the former like Death, and purſue with Reſolution, and perſiſt undaunted and unwearied, and force our way thro' a Diſtemper'd Age, and a Diſorder'd World, with the Courage of Soldiers, that would rather dye then not overcome, that Trains us to the hardeſt Grapples, and bids us declare eternal war againſt Eaſineſs and Follie, and to Diſpute it to the laſt, when attack'd with Strength and Rage, rather then ſurrender our Intereſt and our happineſs, or Deliver up our Souls and our heaven, or if becalm'd with pleaſures, and weaken'd by temptation, it alarms all the powers of the Soul, and throws off the ſoft ruin, and frights the treacherous happineſs, and undo-

doing Joy, and bids the Soul be ſtrong and firm in its Intereſts, and Reſolute and obſtinate againſt the Betrayer and the Invader, and aſſert the Powers of Wiſdome and Fortitude, againſt Force, or Mine, againſt the Peſtilence that walks in darkneſs, or the Arrow that flies by day, and neither will ſuffer its Power to be delivered into Captivity, nor its Beauty into the Enemies hand, but makes it rouſe like a Giant refreſht with Wine, and put its enemies to a perpetual ſhame, it rejects the ſnare, and the Treaty, and the Temptation, and will take nothing in Exchange for the Soul.

Of

Of Peace.

WHO can ſpeak to the Vallue of this Virtue? who can tell how much the Happineſs of Heaven it ſelf conſiſts in't? the Angels poured it on Earth at the Birth of our Saviour, and he pour'd it out again in a double Effuſion a little before his death, my Peace I give unto you, my Peace I leave with you. Whoever is a friend to Mankind, whoever wiſhes well to the World, will admire and promote this Bleſſing and Happineſs, the balm of Societies, the the Joy of Kingdomes, the Bleſſing of Nations, the Reſtorer of Order, and the Preſerver of the World.

Oh

Oh execrable War? that ſtaineſt the Ocean and the Land, that ſcattereſt horror and groans, and travail'ſt with deſolation and death, that putteſt the World in Arms and Miſery, by thee are we robb'd of that ſacred bleſſing of Peace, and by thee depriv'd of the many bleſſings that flow from that one. By thee the Nations are divided, and Kingdoms torn, from thee is toil, and miſery, ſorrow and travail, a labouring and Ambitious mind, and a frighted Conſcience, that turn'ſt the peaceful, World into a Howling Wilderneſs, from thee are Rivers of human blood, and by thee the City is a Forreſt, and the Prince falls like a Lion or a Tiger, before thee fly Order, and Government, Joy and Peace, and Mirth and Innocence, and

and a good Conſcience, and in thy hydeous train and follow, go Murders, and Spoil, and Fire, the weeping Widow, and the expos'd Infant, and the Father ſlain by the Son: and which is more execrable, the friend by his friend, the Captive and the miſerable Prince, and the Holy Man bound, flaming Altars and Blaſphemy: and the troubled, and the Impious Tirant, marching ſlow and heavy, gloomy and Cruel, with a load of guilt and horror, for the blood and happineſs of the World.

Therefore O Sacred Peace of Mind and Societies, how ſhall we ſufficiently prize thy bleſſings, by which the Nations flouriſh, and from which there is Joy over the World? that makeſt the ſingle man to rejoice, and Mankind to triumph, that

that filleth the breaſt with content, and the World with bleſſing, that Reſtoreth Societies, and Order, and turneth the Forreſt into a Kingdom, and Armies into Commonwealths, and in the place of the Lawrel and Oak, planteth the Vine and the Olive, and turneth the Tyrant and the General, into Magiſtrates of Peace, and the Oppreſſors into Righteouſneſs. That breaketh the arrows of the Bow, the Shield, the Sword, and the Battle, and by whom all the Men whoſe hands were mighty, have found nothing. They ſhall proſper that Love thee.

Of Contemplation, and the Active Life.

IN these two Channels run all our Happiness, in the one we behold, in the other we serve him whom our Souls love, in the first we gaze on his beauties, and contemplate his Glory and Majesty, his Power and Love, his Greatness and Condescention, his Omnipotency and Eternity; in the latter, we exert our Creations, and act our Beings, and do what we were made for, and minister to the Glory of the Almighty, we do good, and are blest, and offer the Sacrifice with which God is so much pleas'd, we serve in our Generation,

ration, and lay hold on Eternal life. The firſt ſomtimes raiſes us up to Heaven, and ſomtimes brings down Heaven to us, and is the union of both Worlds, and enlarges the Soul, which by it often mounts to Heaven, notwithſtanding the weight and encumbrance of the body, and views the Eternal Palaces of Glory, and the Manſions of the Bleſt, and the Ineffable Glories of Jeſus, the Redeemer and Saviour of the World, who died and is riſen again, and is ſet on the right hand of the Father; by the latter we ſerve Mankind, and labour in the works of Charity, and entertain ſtrangers, and ſomtimes Angels, and add to our Faith, Works, and make our Religion profitable and uſeful, that others are the better for our Chriſtianity, and the

Age we live in, and while we enſure our own Salvation, we endeavour that of others too, our labours are common, and we aim at the good of all, as well as of our ſelves, we are Generous, and Publick, Noble and enlarg'd, Good and Kind, contriving that every one may be as happy as our ſelves, and placing our own happineſs in the felicity of others, enlarging their Joys, an leſſening their miſeries, and abating their ſorrows, and endeavouring that all the World may be as eaſie as our ſelves, and the ſingle man is concern'd for the whole humane Nature, and the private man for the Common-wealth, and becomes a Father to his Country, and a Common-Good, and the Servant of Virtue, and a Friend to Religion, and promotes its Intereſts, and bleſſes Man-

Mankind, and the Worlds his family, and his great design, is the common Salvation, and the perfect and eternal happiness of all, that humane Nature may rejoyce, and that Religion, and Virtue, and life, might overspread the whole World, and that sin and misery, vice and ruin, might be banisht for ever, here he labours, here he sweats, here he toils, and for this great end, he sacrifices his rest and ease, his private Interest and advantage, and in the accomplishment of it, is abundantly recompenc'd.

By Contemplation we survey the end of our labours, and in the Active life, we perform them, by Contemplation we taste the eternal Joy, and dwell for a while in Heaven, and converse with Angels, as this body will endure, as this imperti-

tinent Life will permit, and in the Active life, we perform the Conditions to which ſo great rewards are promis'd, and fight the Battels, that are Crown'd with eternal Victories and wreaths, with Lawrels and Heaven; and diſcharge thoſe duties, that ſecure our everlaſting happineſs, and by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek, and at laſt obtain Glory, honour, Immortality, and eternal Life.

In the Contemplative Life we converſe with our ſelves, and our hopes, with the pureſt Notions of virtue and happineſs, and the Soul often entercourſes with Angels, and I ſuppoſe chiefly with him thats apointed for her Guard, and for her Director, and whether ſhe will or no, with the evil Spirits, that are always arguing in the behalf of vice, and ſoliciting to ruin, by

by a thouſand falacies, and Enthuſiaſtick Deluſions, with Arguments and Philoſophy finer then any is taught, or learnt in the Schools, by Images and Ideas, that Court and Charm even to the forcing of the corrupt will; and great is their advantage from their immaterial and Spiritual Natures, by which they joyn the Soul in cloſer argument, and when the argument is weak, the Impulſe is ſtrong, and the Deluſion, repeated and immodeſt, and the chief ſeat of the mind is attackt with ſtrength and Violence; and if Ignorant or Infirm, is quickly overcome; but chiefly is the Soul attackt, by one ſingle Spirit, that unceſſantly ſolicits its ruin, and ſpares neither Arguments, nor pains, nor Induſtry, to defeat its happineſs, and the Care of the good Angel, that watches

as unceſſantly for its ſecurity and one of the great advantages of Meditation is to defeat the Stratagems and the falacies of the Spiritual enemy, of whoſe wiles St. *Paul* himſelf had large experience and trouble, for there is in them, the ſubtleſt addreſs, the deepeſt pollicy, the ſlyeſt Inſinuation, the moſt moving Images, and the ſtrongeſt Ideas and perſwaſions; finer then any in Oratory, and arguments ſubtler then any in Phyloſophy.

In the Active life, we follow the great Preſident, who went about doing good, whoſe life was Charity, and who dy'd of Love, and who has declar'd his Religion is nothing but love, and ſhewing it, and has given the higheſt honours to thoſe that have moſt of it. God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and

God

God in him, are the words of the Greateſt Lover that ever was, by whoſe Love the World ſtands out of Eternal flames, for he di'd for that end, and by whoſe Love, and by the Doings, and Sufferings of whoſe Love, the World hopes for Everlaſting Bliſs, and he who beſt follows this Glorious Example, takes the beſt means to ſecure this Everlaſting Happineſs, and lives more like the Holy Jeſus, then any Hermit or Monk in the World, for he like the Holy Jeſus, labours in the common good, and is not ſatisfi'd with a private Salvation, and he prays and meditates as well as the Hermit too, for ſo may a General in the very Agony and doubt of the Battle, and a Prince in the midſt of Councel, and the labouring man in the ſweat of his toyl.

Of Prayer.

WHoever conſiders the Attributes of God, and reflects that he is all Power, all Goodneſs, by his Grace, can ſcarce ceaſe from a conſtant addreſs to the Infinite Object. For in him is an Infinite Sourſe of help, an unexhauſted Goodneſs, an endleſs Mercy, that drowns the offence, and covers the Offender, and charms him by patience into a better life, and ſtronger Vows, and Humbler and Sincerer Addreſſes; his Glory draws the Admiration of the whole World, which is one Common Prayer, and a united, ſecret, Conſtant Devotion of the whole Creation,

on, Adoring the Creating Power, and bleſſing the Mercy of the Upholding Power, that pardons Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin, that's ſlow to Anger, and of Infinite Goodneſs. That made the Man, and therefore lets the ſinner live, till he repents, to live for ever: The unlimited Mercy of the Infinite Being, draws a univerſal *Prayſe*, and Love, from all the Creatures he has made and preſerved; he is always bleſſing, and 'tis our duty to be alwayes praiſing him, his Love has no bounds, nor ought our Zeal and Affection to him have any; ſuch Infinite Beauty and *Perfection*, ought to be attended with endleſs Vows and Addreſs, with the inceſſant Sacrifice of Adoration and Love, and ſuch a readineſs and *Power* to aſſiſt and help,

help, muſt needs be throng'd with Altars and Devotion.

But is there any greater Joy and Honour than *Prayer*? when the Sinner approaches the preſence and mercy of the Creator, to be Careſs'd and Forgiven, to be pardon'd and reſtor'd, and to be cloth'd with the Garments of Joy, inſtead of the Garments of Vengeance, and the Spirit of Heavineſs, what Honour Equal to that of talking to the Almighty? and being anſwerd by the Eternal, to be admitted into an Infinite Preſence, to expoſe our miſeries and declare our wants, and to intreat for ſuccors and aid, while Millions of Angels are preſent at the Addreſs, and are concern'd at our wants, and our guilt, and rejoyce at the Bounty and Mercy of the Eternal King, though they can't but with

with aſtoniſhment cry out, what is man that thou art mindful of him.

By *Prayer* we Cancel the terrible debt of ſin, that lies heavy on our Salvations, and preſſes down our *Souls* to the neathermoſt Hell; but all through the Merits and Interceſſion of the Eternal Son, and Holy Spirit; by Prayer we riſe from the Hell of guilt, and the Furies of *Deſpair*, to the peace of God, and to the Hope of Sons and Heirs, and to the rapturous expectation of Eternal Bliſs; from Tears and *Repentance*, to Halelujahs, and Victory, and *Praiſe*; from trembling at his Juſtice, to rejoycing in his Mercy, and Triumphing in his Salvation.

By Prayer we triumph over the *Powers* of *Darkneſs* and Hell, and overcome in the Agony

gony of Temptation, and reſiſt even unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin; by *Prayer* we bind the Evil Spirit, and avoid the *Peſtilence* that walks in darkneſs, and go upon the Lion and the Adder, the young Lion and the Dragon, and ſhun the Arrow that flies by day; it opens and ſhuts the Heavens, and Caſts the Battle, and reſtores *Peace*, and appeaſes Calamities, and bleſſes the World; by it we proceed in the Difficulties of Virtue, and ſubdue ill habits, and plant good, and become wiſe, and Holy, and Everlaſtingly Happy.

Of

Of the many and contradicting Chriſtianities in Chriſtendom.

MAy they find mercy in that day who firſt divided the Unity of the Faith, and with it deſtroy'd the bond of peace, and righteouſneſs of Life. I think it reaſonable to infer from thoſe words of our Saviour to St. *Paul*; *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me*! that he is capable of a holy trouble and concern in his Glorified State, as likewiſe from the ſimpathy of the Head with the body and the Members; and if ſo, what can we imagin our Holy Sa-

Saviour to be more concern'd at, then the tearing and rending his moſt ſacred body the Church, into ſo many ſects and madneſſes.

Whoever is a Setter up of new Religions, is a Setter up of new Gods, and whoever does ſo, is ſo far from being a Chriſtian, that he is not ſo much as a *Socrates*, a *Jew*, or a good *Mahometan*.

To reſtore the Purity and Unity of the firſt Chriſtanity, and to take away the ſcandal of ſo many Religions, and ſo little life, would be an Enterprize worthy the greateſt Power and the greateſt Piety in the World, and of all the travels of Great *Eudoxia's* Labouring Mind.

Prayer

Prayers.

O Everlaſting Purity and Holineſs, gives us ſuch an imitation of thy Perfection, ſuch a compliance with the Example and the words of thy Holy Child Jeſus, ſuch a concurrence with the Inſpirations of the Holy and eternal Spirit that we ma pleaſe thee in all things through Jeſus.

O Infinite Beauty and Love, O Boundleſs Mercy and Compaſſion, Charm us with thy Beauty, enflame us with thy Love, aſtoniſh and convert us with thy Patience, and through

him

him who offer'd himself on the Altar of the Cross, bring us to thy Glories.

O our Saviour, O our Redeemer, grant that we may live so as that thou maist see of the travel of thy Soul and be satisfied Hear us by thine Agony and bloody sweat, by thy Cross and Passion.

O Eternal Spirit, by thy painful and inutterable Intercessions, cleanse our Bodies, raise our Souls, purifie our Natures, strengthen our Reason, enlarge our Hopes, confirm our Faith, inflame our Charity, and make our Lives answerable to our Faith, and to the great and exceeding Promises, who art Infinite as the Father and the Son.

O

O Holy Bleſſed, and Infinite Spirit, eternal Comfortor, Fountain of Regeneration and Sanctification, enable us to know thy motions, and to obey them, and to know the counterfeit motions of evil ſpirits, and to reſiſt them, reſtore the Baptiſme, fill us with thy fruits, adorn us with thy Gifts, and hear us by thy Coming and Deſcent, and by the groans of thy Interceſſions.

O holy, ſacred, and Incomprehenſible Trinity, be Gracious to the whole Creation, extirpate Error and wickedneſs, enlarge the bounds of the Goſpel give it the uttermoſt parts of the Earth for its Poſſeſſion, but eſpecially thoſe who have corrupt-

rupted its Purity, and destroy'd its power, and Unity. Let its Dominion be from the one Sea to the other, and from the River to the Worlds end, let its Course be swift as the Suns, and let it travell with a brighter Glory, and let its Empire hold with the World.

A Thanksgiving.

Eternal Father, give us all such a sense of thy Infinite Goodness, that we may thank thee as we ought, and praise thee unceſſantly, and love thee with our lives, accept the general Thanksgiving of the World, receive ours; in particular, bleſſing thee

thee for thy self, for the Son of thy Love, for the effusion of the eternal Spirit, for the united Glories, and the confederate Goodness of the Holy and unconceivable Trinity, that conspir'd to our Redemption, and abandon'd the Angels. For the life of Jesus in the flesh, for the Holy Religion he gave, for the Infinite value of his death, and for the Triumphs of his Resurrection, and for the coming of the Holy Ghost. To thee be all praise and Honour Obedience and Love for ever.

Ver-

VErtue alone is Heaven, and Vice is Hell.
Alive we are damn'd, or with the Happy dwell.
As we in Vice or Vertue do excel.

Here we are bleſt or curs'd, if vertuous crown'd,
Tho poor, if vitious curſt, tho Crowns abound.
Rouſe then my frighted Soul! and obſtinately wiſe,
Reject the Ruin, and ſecure the Prize.

No more of ſacred Vertue or of Faith diſpute,
Thy Breaſt confirms the firſt, of th'laſt, the Creed confutes thy doubt.

The

The ſhort, plain, Apoſtles Creed
is all thy Faith;
Live and Believe, is all the ſa-
cred Scripture ſaith.

FINIS.